

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 SAM-01 CIAE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3517

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

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AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

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AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

USMISSION NATO

DIA WASHDC

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 4184

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SUBJ: POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

REF: (A) LISBON 4153; (B) LISBON 4128

SUMMARY: PRIME MINISTER VASCO GONCALVES MET WITH INNER CABINET
JULY 23 TO DISCUSS (A) GOVERNMENT REORGANIZATION BASED UPON
PROPOSED "DIRECTORATE PLAN," AND (B) FORMATION OF "POPULAR
UNITY FRONT" COMPOSED OF PCP, UDP, MES, AND DISSIDENT SOCIALISTS.
PS AND MELO ANTUNES ARE ENCOURAGED BY LOPSIDED VOTE AGAINST
GONCALVES IN INFANTRY CAUCUS JULY 22 PREPARATORY TO AFM ARMY
ASSEMBLY JULY 23. PS SOURCE BELIEVES DECISION RE PRIME MINISTER
WILL COME LATER THIS EVENING, JULY 24. IF MELO
ANTUNES AND OTHER "MODERATES" ON RC ARE SUCCESSFUL IN
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OUSTING GONCALVES, THEY WILL SEEK POSTPONEMENT OF AFM

GENERAL ASSEMBLY SCHEDULED FOR JULY 26. PS SOURCES FEAR JULY 26 ASSEMBLY MAY PRODUCE CALL FOR ARREST OF PS LEADERSHIP AND RC MODERATES. PRO-CHURCH DEMONSTRATION SCHEDULED IN BRAGANCA ON JULY 27 COULD YIELD MORE VIOLENCE. PCP CENTRAL COMMITTEE HAS REBUKED LEIRIAS DISTRICT COMMITTEE FOR ITS CRITICISM OF MILITARY FOR ITS HANDLING OF LAST WEEK'S DEMONSTRATIONS. END SUMMARY.

1. EFFORTS TO FORM GOVERNMENT CONTINUE: PRIME MINISTER VASCO GONCALVES HAS INTENSIFIED EFFORTS TO FORM A NEW GOVERNMENT. ACCORDING TO SOCIALIST SOURCES, GONCALVES MET JULY 23 WITH INNER CABINET TO DISCUSS (A) REORGANIZATION OF GOVERNMENT UNDER PROPOSED DIRECTORATE STRUCTURE (REFTEL A) AND (B) FORMATION OF "POPULAR UNITY FRONT" COMPOSED OF PCP, UDP, MES, AND DISSIDENT SOCIALISTS. COMMUNICATIONS MINISTER JESUINO CORREIA HAS CONFIRMED IN BACKGROUND DISCUSSION WITH NEWSMEN THAT REORGANIZATION PLAN IS BEING ACTIVELY CONSIDERED. SAME SOURCES SAY FOUR SOCIALIST PARTY (PS) MEMBERS ARE RECONSIDERING THEIR DECISION TO JOIN NEW GOVERNMENT FOLLOWING STERN DRESSING DOWN FROM SOARES. SOARES MADE IT CLEAR THEY WOULD BE EXPELLED FROM PS IF THEY ENTERED GOVERNMENT.

2. PS MEMBER WHO SPOKE LATE THIS MORNING WITH MELO ANTUNES' AIDE TOLD EMBOFF THAT MELO ANTUNES IS INTENT UPON SEEING EFFORT TO OUST PRIME MINISTER THROUGH TO THE END AND IS OPTIMISTIC ABOUT OUTCOME. SAME SOURCE SAID CONFIDENCE OF BOTH MELO ANTUNES AND PS BUOYED BY LOPSIDED 56-TO-1 VOTE AGAINST PRIME MINISTER DURING JULY 22 INFANTRY CAUCUS PRIOR TO AFM ARMY ASSEMBLY, PS AND MELO ANTUNES HOPE THIS INDICATIVE OF VIEWS OF AFM ARMY ASSEMBLY. PS SOURCE BELIEVES DECISION RE PRIME MINISTER'S STATUS WILL BE MADE LATER THIS EVENING JULY 24. IF MELO ANTUNES AND RC ALLIES SUCCEED IN OUSTING GONCALVES, THEY WILL SEEK POSTPONEMENT OF AFM GENERAL ASSEMBLY SCHEDULED FOR JULY 26.

3. CHURCH DEMONSTRATION: A DEMONSTRATION TO EXPRESS SOLIDARITY WITH BISHOP AND CHURCH HIERARCHY WILL BE HELD IN BRAGANCA ON JULY 27. NEWS OF DEMONSTRATION HAS PROMPTED DIRECTOR OF "MAY-NORTHEAST" DYNAMIZATION CAMPAIGN AND CIVIL GOVERNOR OF BRAGANCA TO ISSUE NOTICE COUNSELLING AGAINST PARTICIPATION IN "PROVOCATIONS TO REVOLUTIONARY AUTHORITY." CONFIDENTIAL

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4. TRAIN FARE PROTEST: MORE INCIDENTS OCCURRED JULY 23 ON TRAIN LINES SERVING LISBON AS DISGRUNTLED PASSENGERS REFUSED TO PAY INCREASED FARE AND URGED OTHER TO DO SAME. TROOPS HAD TO BE SUMMONED IN ONE INSTANCE TO RESTORE ORDER AFTER PUSHING AND SHOVING THREATENED TO GET OUT OF HAND.

5. PCP CORRECTS RECORD: PCP CENTRAL COMMITTEE ISSUED CLARIFICATION JULY 23 DISAPPROVING STATEMENTS CONTAINED IN COMMUNIQUE ISSUED EARLIER IN WEEK BY PCP DISTRICT COMMITTEE IN LEIRIA. DISTRICT COMMITTEE HAD CRITICIZED MILITARY HANDLING OF INCIDENTS OCCURRING DURING PAST WEEK IN LEIRIA AREA (REFTEL B).

6. COMMENT: IF MELO ANTUNES AND RC "MODERATES" DO NOT MOVE NOW THEY ARE LIKELY TO FIND THEIR STRENGTH AND RESOLVE DISSIPATED. IF IT MEETS, AFM GENERAL ASSEMBLY-- INFANTRY VOTE NOTWITHSTANDING--IS LIKELY TO BE MANIPULATED SO AS TO GIVE PRIME MINISTER A STRONG VOTE OF CONFIDENCE. EFFECT WOULD BE TO WEAKEN HAND OF RC MODERATES AND SAP ANY POSSIBLE WILLINGNESS INDECISIVE COSTA GOMES MIGHT HAVE TO SUPPORT EFFORT TO OUST GONCALVES.

7. BRAGANCA DEMONSTRATION SHAPES UP AS ANOTHER IN BUILDING SERIES OF PHYSICAL CONFRONTATIONS IN NORTH. PCP REBUKE OF LEIRIAS DISTRICT COMMITTEE IS EFFORT TO GET ALL ELEMENTS BEHIND CURRENT PARTY TACTIC STRESSING FULL SUPPORT OF MILITARY AND COOPERATION WITH "PROGRESSIVE" GROUPS IN SUPPORT OF GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL UNITY WITHOUT PS AND PPD PARTICIPATION.
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